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'THE HERMIT LAND.'

UNTIL within quite recent times, Corea has been 'a sealed book' to Europeans. Travellers in China have occasionally made mention of the stern-looking, dignified, and unsmiling Coreans who may be seen twice a year in Pekin—members of the missions who go there periodically to pay tribute to the Emperor of the Sun and to receive the almanac for the current year; but no one ever seems to get speech with them. Remarkable alike in appearance and dress, these representatives of the Hermit Nation seem to regard all foreigners with jealousy and suspicion, and to confirm the general impression of the irreconcilable unfriendliness of the Coreans to all outside nations. These visitors to Pekin, also, never responded to any overtures for trade, and never seemed to have any desire for traffic on their own part; yet this disinclination is probably due to another cause than dislike of foreigners. In other words, it may be because they have nothing to offer, and no money with which to buy foreign products. From what is now being made known with regard to Corea, this at least seems a reasonable inference.

The area of Corea is computed to cover about ninety thousand square miles. The population has been variously estimated; but Mr W. R. Carles, who was recently vice-consul in Corea,* states it to be about ten millions, which is considerably more than has been usually supposed. In physical characteristics, the two coasts of Corea present wide differences. That of the east has a well-defined line, has almost no islands and very few harbours, and has an inappreciable tidal flow. But what ports there are on this coast remain open all the year, even in the higher latitudes; and this is the reason why Russia was so desirous of possessing Port Lazaret as a naval station for her Pacific fleet. The west coast-line,

on the other hand, is much broken up by innumerable islands, closely adjoining the mainland, the intervening spaces being large bare tracts of mud at low water, for on this side the tide recedes a great way. The action of the tide is so violent and the channels through the mud so narrow, that most of the inlets are available only for native boats. There are only some three or four accessible harbours on this coast, and the rivers which find an outlet there are frozen in the winter. The chief rivers flow into the sea on the south and west—namely, the Nak-tong, the Yöng-san, the Keum, and the Han. The Amnok, called also the Yalu, is a fine river which divides Corea from Manchuria.

The interior of Corea is described as, in the northern part, one mass of mountains down to the narrow neck between Gensan on the east and the Yellow Sea, the greatest heights being in the centre. Below this neck, the mountains follow the east coast-line, with branches running inland, thus dividing the country into a series of valleys opening towards the sea. The formation is generally igneous, and in the south the hills fall away into an almost barren plain. The population is most dense in the lowlands, and is frequently reduced by famines and pestilence. In 1886 an epidemic of cholera is said to have carried off one hundred thousand persons in the district surrounding the capital.

The climate is not a bad one, and the weather is usually bright and invigorating. But on the west coast, fogs are sudden and frequent, owing to the great evaporation from the exposed mud-tracts. The rainfall is considerable, and the winters are very cold. The people have a curious method of protecting themselves from the rain: they use a sort of overall waterproof coat made of oiled paper of a bright yellow colour. These paper coats cost only a trifle, and are very serviceable so long as they escape a rent; but when once torn, they are not to be mended by stitches. Mr Carles says he has seen an inferior kind of waterproof garment made out of paper oiled after it had been used in the schools, and the wearers

* *Life in Corea* (London: Macmillan), a work upon which we draw for most of the information in this article.

of which present to the admiring gaze a choice assortment of copy-book texts written in a large hand as models of handwriting. There is something rather attractive in the idea of this twofold utilisation.

It should be mentioned that paper is one of the chief exports of Corea to China, the only two others of any importance being timber and ginseng. The paper is said to be not only strong and impervious to rain, but also excellent for (Chinese) writing purposes, and transparent enough to be used in houses in lieu of glass windows.

Down to about 1873, the Coreans were as Ishmaelites among the nations, with their hands against every one, and with all hands against them. If they have been savage in their persecution of the Christians who endeavoured to obtain a footing among them, and cruel in the murders they have committed, they have also suffered much at the hands of Chinese and Japanese invaders. In fact, so great has been the havoc of the frequent wars, that almost all relics of the earlier history of the country have disappeared, and it is said that hardly a dozen monuments of any antiquity are to be found throughout the length and breadth of the land. And yet it is a country which claims to have historical records covering three thousand years, and from which the art of manufacturing porcelain was imported into Japan many centuries ago. During all her history, however, Corea consistently denied the right of free intercourse between foreigners and her own subjects on her own soil. The first departure from this rule was in 1876, shortly after the present king came to the throne, when a treaty was concluded with Japan which permitted the residence of Japanese at three of the ports, allowed the establishment of a Legation at the capital, and sanctioned the right of trade between the subjects of the two countries under certain restrictions. The ice thus broken, further progress soon followed; and in 1882 treaties were negotiated and partly concluded with Great Britain, the United States, and Germany. A revolution which broke out in this year in Corea caused a good deal of alarm among the foreigners who had begun to gather in the country; but it was quickly suppressed by the aid of the Chinese. Then in 1883 Sir Harry Parkes went on a special mission to arrange a new treaty of friendship and trade, and it was as a member of this mission that Mr Carles gained most of his experience of Corea.

Landing at the port of Chemulpo, night overtook the travellers on the road to Soul, the capital, and they had to find shelter in the house of a Chinese agent residing in a native village. A single description will serve to show the character of Corean domestic architecture generally: 'The house consisted of several detached dwellings, of an architecture half Chinese, half Japanese, each in its own courtyard, and generally facing south. The best of them was raised a couple of feet above the ground, and had an open balcony running along its front, somewhat after the fashion of a stage at a Chinese country theatre. The wood-work was unconcealed by paint or varnish; and the only part which bore any ornament was the lower panels of the windows and doors, the centres of which were in slight relief. Windows

and doors differed but little, each consisting of battens of wood, of which the lower half was filled in with panels, and the upper with a trellis-work covered with Corean paper. The windows slid in grooves to either side; and the doors, when thrown open or closed, were held in place by iron rings passed over knobs of the same material. The eaves of the house projected considerably, especially at the corners; and the roof was of tiles. . . . Furniture there was none; but the walls were neatly covered with white paper; and there was a general air of comfortable cleanliness about the place. Each man was furnished with a pipe with a brass bowl and mouthpiece, and a reed stem nearly three feet long; one or two small brass spittoons on the floor, and a kerosene lamp, betokening the influence of the Chinese tenant. The men were all wearing long white robes of cotton cloth; but one had taken off his conical hat, which was hanging on a peg on the wall, and had on only a tight band to keep his hair in place. The hair, dragged away from the forehead and sides of the head, was gathered together in a knot on the crown in the manner said to have been general in China previous to the establishment of the present dynasty.'

A word as to the curious headgear peculiar to the male Coreans. It is cone-shaped, not unlike the hat of a Welshwoman cut down, and is fitted with a flat circular plate three or four inches wide, which forms the brim. Both hat and brim are made of a substance perforated like the sides of a meat-safe. The hat is black, and is tied under the chin by broad black strings. The women do not wear this hat, but envelop their heads in a green mantle when out of doors—rather to conceal their want of beauty, to judge by Mr Carles' opinion of them. They wear loose baggy trousers; and the feet, which are small and well shaped, are clad in white socks and straw sandals. The men, on the other hand, swathe their feet in many folds of cotton cloth, and so require enormous shoes of the Chinese shape. The people are extremely modest both in garb and demeanour. They will not divest themselves of clothing in the hot weather, as the Japanese do; but they have invented loose wicker-frames, which fit closely to the body so as to keep the clothes from contact with the skin. This is to prevent saturation by perspiration, and thus to serve as a preventive against chills. They are great talkers, and seem to be much more fond of gossip and smoking than hard work.

Soul, the capital, is a walled city of some one hundred and fifty thousand to two hundred thousand inhabitants. The houses are closely packed together, and the main street runs for about three miles from east to west. This street is about forty yards wide, and serves as the market-place; while the side-streets are narrow and very dirty. The shops and stalls are much more interesting in themselves than for the wares they expose for sale; these, indeed, are commonplace, and Corea generally seems poor in 'curios.' The silks, for which Corea once had a sort of mythical reputation, turn out a great disappointment, being knotty, poor of lustre, and narrow in breadth. More artistic are the saddlery wares—leather ornamented with silver in an attractive manner. Pony-back, indeed, seems the only mode of loco-

motion for those who would travel distances. Sedan-chairs exist, but the Coreans have not learned to carry them, or indeed any burdens, with the deftness and labour-saving skill which seem to come natural to the Chinese. The life and movement of the streets, however, are full of endless interest, of quaint objects, and variety of colour. The officials are remarkable for the gorgeousness of their apparel, and the long robes of ordinary persons give a furnished appearance to the general picture.

The king has two palaces in Soul, and Europeans have now free access to the grounds, which in the case of one of them are nearly a mile square, and spread up the slope of a hill prettily wooded with firs. The country round Soul is broken up into rice-fields wherever water is available; and where not, cotton, maize, millet, and beans are cultivated for local consumption. There is not the most rudimentary idea of sanitation either in the provincial towns or in the capital; and the marks of smallpox are almost everywhere to be seen.

Corea is divided into eight provinces, and Mr Carles made a tour through about half of them—those, namely, of the northern portion of the kingdom, and right up to the Manchurian frontier. His object was to see the condition of the country and its capabilities for trade. Instead of hostility, he everywhere experienced the greatest friendliness and hospitality, for which no doubt the credentials he bore from the court were largely to be thanked; but he found the people poor and unenterprising, and, in more places than one, approaching the verge of starvation.

At times, on the country roads, curious figures were seen. Planted on both sides of the way would be wooden posts, on one face of which is carved a rude representation of a human face with very prominent teeth. The teeth and cheeks are coloured, and the whole effect sufficiently fiendish. These figures are called *syon-sal-mak-i*, and are intended to frighten away evil spirits from the roads and the villages. The mileposts are also often similarly decorated.

This practice seems to show a belief in spirits somewhat analogous to that of the Chinese; and in fact Buddhism prevailed in Corea in ancient days, although it has been under repression since the present dynasty came into power. Buddhist remains are frequently to be seen; and Mr Carles describes two colossal stone figures, cut out of the boulders *in situ*, which he saw on his journey. The figures are half-length, and one wears a round cap, and the other a square cap, of stone. They are supposed to represent the male and female aspects of nature, and are, with other figures of the same kind, called by the Coreans *miriok*, which seems to be the equivalent of the Chinese *mi-lé*, or Buddha. But the Coreans apply the same word to all statues, and even to natural rock formations resembling human figures. There is a very large *miriok* at Un-jin which is said to be sixty-four feet high, and concerning which the following legend is current. Long ago, a country-woman was gathering firewood on the hillside, when a high pinnacle of rock suddenly sprang up through the ground. She reported the occurrence to the governor of the province, who in turn reported it to the capital. There it was decided that the rock was designed to furnish a statue of

Buddha, and the government ordered one to be cut, which was done accordingly.

It has been remarked that there are evidences of fetic-h-worship about most Corean villages; and the care with which snakes are avoided rather than attacked seems to suggest a survival of serpent-worship. But, indeed, there is a good deal of light yet wanted on the subject of Corean religion and folk-lore.

The pugnaciousness of the Coreans has long been traditional, and probably not without reason. At anyrate, in the important northern town of Phýong-yang, stone-throwing seems to be cultivated as a fine art; and at certain seasons of the year, leave is given for a general fight among the inhabitants, when town-folk and country-folk engage in a war of stones for three days. Sometimes a man is killed, but the event is then regarded as a holiday accident, and no notice is taken of it by the authorities.

In the villages there is a species of self-government which is interesting. The village elders are divided into three classes: the *tsou-ou* and the *tjou-shang*—who are chosen by the villagers—and the *sa-im*, who are appointed by the magistrate of the district. To the *tsou-ou* belong the settlement of all minor disputes among the villagers, and the keeping of account of the land-tax, due from every house. To the *tjou-shang* belong the duties of looking after the roads and bridges, and of reporting the births and deaths to the *sa-im*. The *sa-im* keep the register of the population, and deposit a copy of it with the magistrate. There is a school, as we gather, in every village of importance; and about ten per cent. of the people can write Chinese, which is regarded as the only language worth learning.

Corea has some reputation for minerals, and Europeans have been diligently prospecting for gold and silver and lead, but not apparently with much success as yet. Copper-mining has been carried on to some extent by the Coreans. The trade of the country is small and of a retail character. We have already named the chief exports, and there does not seem much else to be obtained at present. At the same time, Corea is capable of producing many things if the inhabitants had only some of the energy and perseverance of their neighbours to the north, in Manchuria. Mr Carles does not have much opinion of the commercial prospects. At first, when foreigners began to come, beans were suddenly discovered to be a marketable commodity, and they were brought forward with zeal, measured, and put into bags. By-and-by the people tired of that, and found that foreigners would also buy bones. Bones then became the object of spasmodic attention, and a good trade was done in them, until zeal again slackened. And so on with other commodities.

Ginseng, which is exported to China, is a government, or rather a royal, monopoly. The king grants licenses to certain farmers to cultivate the root, and derives about one hundred thousand pounds sterling a year from the industry, such as it is. Ginseng is believed by the Chinese to have the recuperative virtues which used to be ascribed in Europe to the mandrake, and the roots are worth their weight in silver in China. The plant, which grows slowly, is raised from seeds that are sown in March. In the first or second year, the ginseng plant is only two or three inches

high, and has only two leaves. It is transplanted frequently during this period. In the fourth year the stem is about six inches high; and in the fifth year a strong healthy plant has reached maturity, though it is more usual not to take it up until it has reached the sixth season.

In conclusion, it would seem that now, when 'the Hermit Land' is at length opened up to Europeans, its reputed wealth has disappeared. Even the Japanese find it impossible to thrive on Korean trade as it exists at present; but there may be better days ahead. One cannot expect much vigour in a nation which has wilfully shut itself up from the rest of the world for three thousand years.

THIS MORTAL COIL.

BY GRANT ALLEN, AUTHOR OF 'IN ALL SHADES,' ETC.

CHAPTER XVI.—FROM INFORMATION RECEIVED.

AT Whitestrand itself, that same afternoon, Hugh Massinger sat in his own little parlour at the village inn, feverish and eager, as he had always been since that terrible night when 'Elsie was drowned,' as he firmly believed without doubt or question; and in the bar across the passage, a couple of new-comers, rough waterside characters, were talking loudly in the seafaring tongue about some matter of their own over a pint of beer and a pipe of tobacco. Hugh tried in vain for many minutes to interest himself in the concluding verses of his *Death of Alaric*—anything for an escape from this gnawing remorse—but his Hippocrene was dry, his Pegasus refused to budge a feather: he could find no rhymes and grind out no sentiments; till, angry with himself at last for his own unproductiveness, he leant back in his chair with profound annoyance and listened listlessly to the strange disjointed echoes of gossip that came to him in fragments through the half-open door from the adjoining taproom. To his immense surprise, the talk was not now of top-sails or of spinnakers: conversation seemed to have taken a literary turn; he caught more than once through a haze of words the unexpected name of Charles Dickens.

The oddity of its occurrence in such company made him prick up his ears. He strained his hearing to catch the context.

'Yes,' the voice drawled out in a low London accent tinged with the peculiar Wapping dialect; 'I read that there book, *Our Mutual Friend*, I think 'e calls it. A pal o' mine, 'e said to me right out at the time, "Bill," says 'e, "that there Dickens 'ave took a leaf out o' your book," says 'e; "e've been a-takin' of you off: 'e've showed you up in print, 'e 'ave, under the halias of Rogue Rider'ood," says 'e; "an' you'd oughter read it, if it was for nothin' on earth but for the sake o' the likeness."—"Is that so?" says I, never thinkin' 'e meant it, as the sayin' is. "It is," says 'e; "an' you've got to look into it."—Well, I got a 'old o' the book, an' I read it right through on 'is recommendation: leastways, my missus she read it out loud to me: she've 'ad a eddication, my missus 'ave: an' it's a pack o' rot, that's wot I calls it. There ain't no kind o' sense in it, to my thinkin'.'

'The cap don't fit you, then, says you,' the other voice retorted with a gurgle of tobacco. 'E ain't drawn you so as a man could recognise you.'

'Recognise me! Well, recognisin' ain't in it, d'ye see. Wot 'e says is just a lot o' rubbish. This 'ere Rogue Rider'ood, accordin' to the story, 'e'd used to row about Lime'ouse Reach, a-searchin' for bodies.'

'A-searchin' for bodies!' the second man repeated with an incredulous whiff. 'Wy, wot the dooce did 'e want to go an' do that for?'

'Well, that's just where it is, don't you see? 'E done it for a liveli'ood. A liveli'ood, says I, wen my missus reads that part out to me; wot liveli'ood could a beggar make out o' bodies, says I? 'Tain't as though a body was worth anything nowadays, viewed as a body, says I, argumentative-like. A man as knowed anything about the riverside wouldn't never 'a gone writin' such rubbish as that, an' in a printed book, too, as 'ad ought to be wrote careful an' ackerate. It's my opinion, says I, as this 'ere Dickens is a over-rated man. A body nowadays, wether it's a drowned body or a natral body, ain't worth nothing, not the clothes it stands up in, viewed as a body. Times was wen a body was always acshally a body, an' worth savin' for itself, afore the 'Natomy Ack. But wot's it worth now? Wy, 'arf a crown for landin' it, paid by the parish, if it's landed in Essex, or five bob if you tow it over Surrey side o' the river. Not but wot I grant you there's bodies an' bodies. If a nob drowns hisself, wy, then, o' course there's sometimes as much as fifty pound, or might be a 'undred, set upon the body. 'Is friends is glad to get the corpse back, an' 'ave it buried reglar in the family churchyard. A reward's offered free enough for a nob, I don't deny it. But 'ow many nob's goes an' drowns theirselves in a season, d' you suppose: an' 'oo as knowed anything about the river would go a-looking for nob's in Lime'ouse Reach or way down Bermondsey way?'

'Stands to reason they wouldn't, Bill,' the other voice answered with a quiet chuckle.

'O' course it stands to reason,' Bill replied with an emphatic expletive. 'Wen a nob drowns hisself, 'e don't go an' throw hisself off London Bridge; no, nor off Blackfriars neither, you warrant you. 'E don't go an' put hisself out aforehand for nothin' like that, takin' a 'bus into the City, as you may say, out o' pure foolishness. 'E just claps 'is 'at on 'is 'ead an' strolls down to Wesminster Bridge, as it maybe 'ere, or to Charin' Cross or Waterloo—a lot of 'em goes over Waterloo, perlice or no perlice; an' 'e jumps in close an' 'andy by 'is own door, in the manner o' speakin', an' is done with it immejately.—But wot's the use o' lookin' for 'im after that, below bridge, away down at Lime'ouse? Anybody as knows the river knows well as a body startin' from Waterloo, or maybe from Wesminster, don't go down to Lime'ouse, ebb or flow, nor nothin' like it. It gets into the whirlpool of Saunders's Wharf, an' ketches the back-current, an' turns round an' round till it's throwed up by the tide, as you may say, upward, on the mud at Millbank, or by Lambeth Stangate. So there ain't no liveli'ood to be made any'ow by picking up bodies down about Lime'ouse; an' it's always been my opinion ever since then that that there Dickens is a very much overrated person.'

'There ain't no doubt about it,' the other answered. 'If 'e said that, there can't be no doubt at all about it.'

To Hugh Massinger, sitting apart in his own room, these strange scraps of an alien conversation had just then a ghastly and horrible fascination. These men were accustomed, then, to drowned corpses! They were connoisseurs in drowning. They knew the ways of bodies like regular experts. He listened, spellbound, to catch their next sentences. There was a short pause, during which—as he judged by the way they breathed—each took a long pull at the pewter mug, and then the last speaker began again. ‘You’d oughter know,’ he murmured musingly, ‘for I s’pose there ain’t any man on the river anywheres as ‘as ‘ad to do with as many bodies as you ‘ave.’

‘That’s so!’ the first person assented emphatically. ‘Thirty year I’ve served the Trinity ‘ouse, rain or shine, an’ you don’t provision lightships that long without learnin’ a thing or two on the way about bodies. The current carries ‘em all one way round. A body as starts on its journey at Wesminster, as it may be ‘ere, goes ashore at Millbank. A body as begins at London Bridge, comes out, as reg’lar as clockwork, on the furrer end o’ the Isle o’ Dogs.—It’s just the same along this ‘ere east coast ‘ere. I picked up that gal I’ve come about to-day on the north side o’ the Orfordness Light, by the back o’ the Trinity groyne or thereabouts. A body as comes up on the north side of Orfordness ‘as always drifted down from the nor-west’ard. So it stands to reason this ‘ere gal I’ve got lying up there must ‘a come with the ebb from Walberswick or Aldeburgh, or maybe Whitstrand: there ain’t no other way out of it any’ow. Well, they told me at Walberswick there was a young lady a-missin’ over ‘ere at Whitstrand—a young lady from the ‘All—a lady o’ property, seemin’—and as there might be money on it, or again there mightn’t, wy I come up ‘ere o’ course to make all proper inquiries.’

Hugh Massinger’s heart gave a terrible bound. O heavens! that things should have come to this pass. That wretch had found Elsie’s body!

In what a tangled maze of impossibilities had he enmeshed himself for ever by that one false step of the forged letter. This wretch had found Elsie’s body—the body that he loved with all his soul—and he could neither claim it himself nor look upon it, bury it nor show the faintest interest in it, without involving his case still further in endless complications, and rousing suspicions of fatal import against his own character.

He waited breathless for the next sentence. The second speaker went on once more. ‘And it don’t fit?’ he suggested, inquiringly.

‘No; it don’t fit, drat it,’ the man called Bill answered in an impatient tone. ‘She ain’t drowned at all, the young lady as is missing at the ‘All. They’ve ‘ad letters an’ telegrams from ‘er, dated later nor the day I found ‘er. I’ve ‘anded over the body to the county perlice; it’s in the mortuary at the Low Light; an’ I shan’t ‘ave no more nor ‘arf a crown from the parish after all for all my trouble. Suffolk and Essex is half-a-crown counties; Surrey’s more liberal: it goes to five bob on ‘em. Wy, I’m more’n eight shillin’s out o’ pocket by that there gal already, wot with loss of time an’ travellin’ expenses an’ that. Next time I catches a body unbeknown knockin’ about permissious on a lee-shore, with the tide runnin’, an’ the breakers

poundin’ it on its face on the shingle, they may whistle for it theirselves, that’s wot they may do; I ain’t agoin’ to trouble my ‘ead about it. Make a liveli’ood out of it, indeed! Wy, it’s all rubbish, that’s wot it is. It’s my opinion that that there Dickens was a very much overrated person.’

Hugh Massinger rose slowly, like one stunned, walked across the room, as in a dream, to the door, closed it noiselessly, for he could contain himself no longer, and then, burying his face silently in his arms, cried to himself a long and bitter cry, the tears following one another hot and fast down his burning cheeks, while his throat was choked by a rising ball that seemed to check his breath and impede the utterance of his stifled sobs. Elsie was dead, dead for him as if he had actually seen her drowned body cast up, unknown, as the man so hideously and graphically described it in his callous brutality, upon the long spit of the Orfordness lighthouse. He didn’t for one moment doubt that it was she indeed whom the fellow had found and placed in the mortuary. His own lie reacted fatally against himself. He had put others on a false track, and now the false track misled his own spirit. From that day forth, Elsie was indeed dead, dead, dead for him. Alive in reality, and for all else save him, she was dead for him as though he had seen her buried. And yet, most terrible irony of all, he must still pretend before all the world strenuously and ceaselessly to believe her living. He must never in a single forgetful moment display his grief and remorse for the past; his sorrow for the loss of the one woman he had really loved—and basely betrayed; his profound affection for her now she was gone and lost to him for ever. He dare not even inquire—for the present at least—where she would be laid, or what would be done with her poor dishonoured and neglected corpse. It must be buried, unheeded, in a pauper’s nameless grave, by creatures as base and cruel as the one who had discovered it tossing on the shore, and regarded it only as a lucky find to make half-a-crown out of. Hugh’s inmost soul was revolted at the thought. And yet— And yet, even so, he was not man enough to go boldly down to Orfordness and claim and rescue that sacred corpse, as he truly and firmly believed it to be, of Elsie Challoner’s. He meant still in his craven soul to stand well with the world, and to crown his perfidy by marrying Winifred.

GALLOWS TREE ON HAMPSTEAD HEATH.

AN ancient elm stands on the verge of Hampstead Heath, over against the gardens of Wildwood, at the side of Heath Hill Road. When stripped of its leaves, the gnarled trunk and rugged limbs stand out in bold relief against the sky, the outline being filled in with a delicate tracery of twigs. Here and there a broken branch tells of the ravages wrought by wind and weather. One stunted bough which stretches out over the pathway, and must once have hung over the road, has been blasted by lightning. The lower branches, too, have been roughly hacked with axe and saw, for they still show the scars which time has but rudely healed. Yet the elm is vigorous

in its old age; and in summer-time its spreading foliage throws a welcome shade over the low wooden seat which has been put up beneath it. And every autumn its glories glow undimmed when the sun lights up the blended hues of its golden leaves, casting ever-shifting shadows, which in turn create a thousand tints. This is the Gallows Tree.

It is not perhaps so old as the Chequer Elm, which according to local tradition was planted in the days of Stephen; nor, probably, as the famous Chipstead Elm, under which it is said the Kentish rustics held their annual fairs during the Wars of the Roses; nor yet as the Crawley Elm, within whose hollowed trunk Druids may have found a retreat. But although it cannot claim so great an antiquity as these silvan monarchs, the Hampstead Elm is old enough for the legends which cluster round it to be themselves forgotten. Few, certainly, of the hundreds of couples who rest beneath it on summer evenings, or of the thousands who pass under it on their way to North End or the West Heath, even think of its associations. But it is only for the few that old-time memories have a living voice.

It is, for instance, already almost forgotten that Addison and his friends used at times to spend their summer evenings in the gardens of the *Bull and Bush*. There is now nothing to show that Dr Mark Akenside lived and practised, after a fashion, at North End. It is scarcely remembered, even by art critics, that Linnell struggled against poverty and neglect in a little farmhouse which stood on the northern edge of the heath. There is little to recall the fact that Lord Chatham spent that terrible twelvemonth in which he abandoned himself to his infirmities, at Wildwood; and the remembrance of the all-powerful minister gloomily sitting at the little oriel window and gazing away over North End across the green fields of Heath Farm and the trees of Bishop's Wood, while the destinies of the nation were trembling in the balance, is largely lost upon the crowds of holiday-makers who pass the Holly Bush and stroll through Wildwood Grove towards the Spaniards' Road, or saunter up Heath Hill Road to Jack Straw's Castle. And you may interview all the oldest inhabitants in vain as to the origin of the weird name which still belongs to this ancient elm.

Some garrulous old woman, perchance, may recount, upon persuasion, a mysterious story about Lord Chatham and Wildwood, which makes out that the tree is in some way or other connected with the death of that eminent minister. Indeed it would not be surprising if the intelligent foreigner had appropriated the notion, and now that English history is being rewritten at Paris, we may yet have some such version of the fate of the great Pitt. Nor is it surprising that mystery should surround Lord Chatham's sojourn at Hampstead, that some echoes of the suspense through which the country then passed should have come down to our own times. The house has been considerably enlarged since then—it has been raised another story—but the room in which Lord Chatham chiefly lived is still preserved; and the double-doored aperture through which the unfortunate statesman communicated with his servants is, or was very recently, still to be seen. The story has often been told; but

it is unsatisfactory in some of its details. Here Lord Chatham, it is said, lived in utter seclusion. Even his meals, we are told, were placed in the little cupboard, and the outer door being shut, a signal was given when they were ready. Now we know that while at Hampstead, Lord Chatham drove frequently about the heath; and since he went there for the sake of that dry and bracing air, which still, in spite of the inundation of bricks and mortar, makes the northern heights of London famous not only as a suburb but as a health resort, it seems to follow as a matter of course that he would walk at times on the less-frequented paths, many of which were then as secluded as the most ardent recluse could desire.

It is easy to conjure up the lovely isolation of the little straggling village. Hampstead was in 1768 'far from the madding crowd.' The fame of the Wells, which had been at its zenith during the first half of the century, was now on the decline, so that it was no longer one of the most dissipated watering-places in the kingdom; and the coffee-rooms, dancing-rooms, raffling-shops, bowling-greens, which had sprung up with the Wells, were now almost deserted. The fashionable throng, indeed, at this time seldom went farther than Belsize House, still in the height of its reputation as a place of amusement, in spite of the rivalry of Ranelagh and Vauxhall, of which it was the prototype. It was a few years later than this that four hundred coaches of the nobility and gentry came to Belsize on one occasion to see a wild-deer hunted and killed in the Park. But for the fairs, which were held on the Lower Flask Tavern Walk, and the races, which were run on the East Heath, and for the holiday-makers, who could never have been very numerous, since the population of London was then less than eight hundred thousand, much of the common must have been delightfully rural and deserted. It is, too, certain that Lord Chatham would walk in the gardens of Wildwood, where he would be free from the observation of the curious; but, beyond the possibility that he may have sat under its branches, there is no foundation for the fabled connection between Lord Chatham and the Gallows Tree.

Another legend, more shadowy still, is the only authority for the rumour that a murder was committed in the garden of Wildwood, and that the murderer expiated his crime on this convenient gibbet. This is still a favourite after-dinner anecdote at Hampstead, and its recital commonly gains an adventitious interest by whispered suggestions that the garden is still haunted by the shrieking spectre of the victim. There is, it is true, a story extant that in a summer-house here a butler once upon a time killed a confiding cook. This is, however, probably apocryphal. The names of the murderer and the victim have not been preserved. It is not even known why or how the deed was done, so that its authenticity may well be doubted.

A genuine murder was, however, committed at Fortune Green, near West End, where gypsies still do congregate in tents and caravans, and lend a general aspect of rural vagabondism to the surroundings of Hampstead Cemetery. Here one Thomas Cowley was foully done to death. The crime was believed to have been committed by Martha Bradley, a gypsy, and 'other persons

unknown.' Martha Bradley was put upon her trial; but the prosecution broke down for want of evidence, and instead of being hanged upon the Gallows Tree, the prisoner left the court 'without a stain upon her character.' This seems to be a natural inference from the fact that she spent her old age in the almshouses, which were still so characteristic a feature of the Vale of Health when Shelley, Keats, Hazlitt, and Haydon used to meet there in the house of Leigh Hunt. It is said that the old woman was in the habit of muttering to herself the details of the dark deed; while in the silent watches of the night she was overheard by her neighbours moaning and crying for mercy and pardon. The story, if true, shows that, in spite of the fitness of things, there is no link between Martha Bradley and the Hampstead Elm.

But it is not surprising that the true and veracious history of the ill-omened *genius loci* should have been forgotten; for we must go back for it for more than two hundred years. There is a rare and curious quarto tract, dated 1674, and called on the title-page, 'Jackson's Recantation, or the Life and Death of the Notorious Highwayman now hanging in chains at Hampstead, delivered to a friend a little before execution; wherein is truly discovered the whole mystery of that Wicked and Fatal Profession of Padding in the Road.' It is not a vulgar confession, for Jackson says little or nothing as to the crime for which he was condemned; but an autobiographical sketch, and therefore an early example of our now fashionable criminal literature. It has the true prison ring common to these productions in every age; and although it is owing to the enterprise of Mr Samuel Swinfincks that it saw the light, there is a *vraisemblance* about it which seems to distinguish it from the concocted catchpennies commonly sold at Tyburn, in much the same way as their modern counterparts are now hawked in the Strand. An affectation of candour, a simulation of sincerity, a veneer of penitence, are as marked traits of Jackson's 'Recantation' as of the revelations of many modern felons. In the guise of advice to the public, he contrives to give his brethren of the road many excellent hints as to the best and safest method of carrying on their profession. Any one who is robbed on the highway, for instance, is advised, instead of scouring the country, to go to Holborn Bars, St James's Street Westminster, Bankside Southwark, Lambeth, or Foxhall, in search both of thieves and property; and the advice is so far sound that it is equally useful for footpads and passengers. To lie *perdu* in London town until the hue and cry is over has always been the favourite dodge of persons 'wanted.' The tract is, moreover, really useful, as throwing a vivid side-light upon the seamy side of life in London in the middle of the seventeenth century. Even Ned Ward is not more graphic.

Early in his career, Jackson, who was born of 'poor but honest parents,' is reduced to the lowest ebb, when the lucky find, in the gutter, of a purse containing fifty guineas sets him on his legs again. He sets up as a man about town, and for a time makes a satisfactory livelihood as a sharper and blackleg. In his own expressive language, he

'nicks the nicker' very much to his satisfaction. But London becoming too hot to hold him, Jackson was easily persuaded by one of his pals to take to the road, then the recognised resource of any one who was 'down on his luck.' His career was near coming to a sudden end, for he was caught after robbing a coach near Barnet. Fortunately for him, however, the prosecutor proved amenable to bribery, agreeing not to bring any evidence against him if he restored the property!

In company with three others, he next 'infested' the Marlborough Downs, where he drove a brisk trade. Putting up at the various inns, where, according to his account, highwaymen were always welcome, they picked up plenty of information as to the movements of travellers, whom they robbed so systematically, that the band soon made themselves a terror to the whole neighbourhood.

It is curious to find in this old tract a version of the oft-told tale of how the attorney was overreached by the highwayman, and it is quite possible that this is the original, which has been stolen by later highwaymen, story-tellers, and other dishonest persons. Thomas Jackson's account is at anyrate very circumstantial. Chancing to meet at one of the inns an attorney going to London, he got into conversation with him, and, according to his custom, turned the talk upon the robberies which had recently been committed in the neighbourhood. The lawyer fell into the trap, and, with an assurance not uncommon in his profession, boasted of the immunity from robbery which he enjoyed owing to certain precautions of his own devising. No footpads, he asseverated, would rob him. Jackson expressing incredulity, the attorney, in order to justify his boast, showed him his saddle, in which he had concealed one hundred and fifty pounds in gold. Jackson at once gave his friends the hint; and the confiding lawyer was 'stopped' when he had gone a few miles on his way to London. He cheerfully gave up the loose cash which he had upon his person; but when the highwaymen cut open his saddle, he loudly proclaimed his conviction that they were in league with the Evil One.

There is another story which is probably true, because, so far as it goes, it does not redound to Jackson's professional credit. A seaman who had just landed after a long voyage and was on his way home alone with his pay (sixty-five pounds) upon him, although he had been warned that the highwaymen were out, was speedily punished for his temerity by Jackson, who relieved him of his money. Hereupon, the sailor declared that he was destitute and desperate, and offered to throw in his lot with the gang. In some way or other he succeeded in convincing them of the sincerity of his resolution, for, after a while, he was told off to accompany Jackson, who had charge of the money. But no sooner had the two got well away from the rest, than the sailor pulled out a pistol, and, in true highwayman fashion, demanded Jackson's money or his life. With a very bad grace Jackson gave up the money; and his chagrin was not unnaturally increased when the seaman made him exchange horses, the one a picked animal, the other a wretched screw.

As to the details of the crime for which he was convicted, he says nothing. All that is now known is, that when on the road near North End

he murdered and robbed Henry Miller. The offence was brought home to him, and he was condemned to death. There were then two elm-trees on Hampstead Heath, near North End, of which only one still lives, and it was betwixt the two that the gibbet was erected on which Jackson was hanged, and, after the unpleasant if morally wholesome fashion of the time, hung in chains. The post of the gibbet was afterwards used as a mantel-tree over the fireplace in the kitchen of Jack Straw's Castle. It is the surviving tree which is still known by the name of the Gallows Tree, although the episode from which it is derived has long since been forgotten.

Hampstead Heath has always figured largely in the chronicles of highway robbers and robberies. Thomas Jackson's reputation was obscured by the notoriety of his well-known contemporary, Claude Duval, who was hanged in 1669, and afterwards canonised by the mob. There are few more curious illustrations of the times than the spectacle of the body of the notorious French highwayman lying in state at a tavern in St Giles's, and being afterwards buried in state in the middle aisle of St Paul's, Covent Garden. And many of Duval's 'deeds of daring,' as they are uniformly described in the books, were committed on the highway near Hampstead and Highgate, for Hornsey Lane was that ruffian's favourite haunt. There is, too, a tradition that Dick Turpin, in the next century, lived at Hampstead; but this is without authority. Turpin's chosen rendezvous was in Hackney Marshes. In 1737, it is true, after he had shot one of his pursuers, near Epping Forest, he came to Islington, and for a time drove a thriving business in the back lanes of Holloway and Hampstead. The numbers of rich and fashionable people who frequented Belsize House when it was at the height of its popularity, as a matter of course attracted crowds of footpads to the roads by which it was reached. 'Twelve stout fellows completely armed,' it was announced in the advertisements of entertainments, regularly patrolled the London Road; and the number was soon afterwards increased to thirty. In fact, Hampstead was a rival of Hounslow Heath for highway robberies up to the beginning of the present century.

It is almost impossible for us to realise the terrorism under which our ancestors lived so long; and it seems incredible, in view of the robberies committed in London and the suburbs almost daily for nearly two centuries, that some system of constabulary was not much sooner adopted. But nevertheless, it is only within the last sixty years that the 'wicked and fatal profession of padding in the road' has been put down. The road between Kensington and London, for instance, was never decently safe until 1799, when a horse-patrol was first appointed. In the early years of the present century, robberies were constantly committed in Belgrave and Eaton Squares, then the Five Fields. A sort of volunteer military organisation was got up to protect the inhabitants of Islington, Kentish Town, and Marylebone; and the example was followed in other parts of London. But for the most part the public had to protect themselves; and such was the fear, which the ruffians of the road took good care to keep alive, that they did this after a helpless and half-hearted fashion.

As for the halo of romance which surrounded highwaymen as a class, this is scarcely to be wondered at, if we remember how completely they defied society. There were, it is said, many fair mourners for M'Lean, so that it must in those days have been looked upon as a feat to fire a pistol at a man like Horace Walpole, as he did in Hyde Park in November 1749. It is easier to appreciate the daring hardihood of Dick Turpin, who kissed Mrs Fountayne, the fashionable beauty of the season, in Marylebone Gardens. We can understand how such an act of gallantry would add to his reputation, and serve, if need were, to palliate such vulgar offences as robbery and murder.

It is customary to cry out against the penal code of the eighteenth century as repulsive in its severity, and there is an absurd amount of sympathy still wasted over the memories of highwaymen who richly deserved their fate. The number of broken-down gentlemen and bankrupt tradesmen who 'took to the road,' and so raised the 'profession' in the social scale, bore no proportion to the vulgar and depraved sections of the fraternity of thieves who pursued the trade systematically, now in the towns, now on the highways, now on the bridle-paths. The annals of highway robbery indeed show plainly that the 'gentlemen of the road' of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries were really analogous to the burglars and pickpockets of our own times. Thomas Jackson's 'Recantation,' for all its grandiloquence, shows him to have been little more than a petty and pitiful rogue.

THE LOST BOND.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAP. I.

I WAS articled to that eminent firm of solicitors, Messrs Gurney and Grafton, of Lincoln's Inn Fields, who, for the modest premium of three hundred guineas, allowed me to sit in their office and assist them with the work, with liberty to pick up law in the best way I could. Having duly served my time and passed all my examinations, I was declared by the examiners to be a duly qualified solicitor, entitled to charge a fee of six-and-eightpence for my advice.

I had not a large capital when I began my legal studies, and by the time I had finished my articles, it had become so much diminished, that I deemed it advisable to lose no time in setting to work to earn my own living. No doubt, the most prudent course for me would have been to obtain a situation with a firm of solicitors, in order to gain a little more experience; but I was young and inexperienced, and in a hurry to be my own master. I at once began to look about for a suitable locality in which to start business on my own account. This was a more difficult matter than I expected. I had no connections anywhere, and therefore had nothing either to guide or fetter me in my choice. London I left out of the question altogether, as being, in my opinion, the most difficult place for any one without influence to work up a practice in. Every place I visited seemed to be well supplied with gentlemen learned in the law, and to be in no need of further additions. However, after a good deal of inquiry and travelling about, I fixed upon

the quiet little market town of Barton in which to begin operations; and having taken an office in Church Street and engaged an office-boy, I notified to the inhabitants that I was ready to render them any legal assistance they might require, by affixing a brass plate on the door with my name and description inscribed thereon.

But the good people of Barton seemed to be either very peaceably inclined, or to be shy of strangers, for week by week and month by month went by, till six months had elapsed, and the business I had transacted had been practically nil, the little I had done being of a very unremunerative character. Meantime, the balance I had placed at the bank on settling at Barton was rapidly decreasing, the entries in my bank book being, unfortunately, all on the wrong side. In fact, I began to think I had made a mistake in setting up for myself so soon, and that the best thing I could do would be to try to obtain a situation.

I was sitting in my office one afternoon meditating on these things. I had been trying to read *Chitty on Contracts*, but I seemed unable to fix my mind on anything that day, and the book lay unheeded on the table before me. By degrees I fell into a brown-study, and was getting into quite a gloomy state of mind, when I was interrupted by the office-boy bringing in the letters. These consisted of a few bills and circulars, a requisition from the income-tax collector to fill up the amount of my income during the previous year, one or two private letters, and last, but not least, the *Law Times*. I soon disposed of the former communications, and having opened the 'Journal of the Law and the Lawyers,' prepared to refresh my mind with an account of the doings of the legal world during the week. But fate seemed against me to-day, for almost the first thing that caught my eye was an article on 'The Overcrowded State of the Legal Profession;' and when I had read, with a mournful kind of interest, an account of the alarming rate at which the profession had increased during the last few years, while the amount of fees, owing to the influence of recent legislation, was steadily diminishing, I quite agreed with the writer of the article that the profession was going to the dogs.

I threw the paper down in disgust, and walked to the window and looked out. It was a hot, drowsy afternoon, which seemed to have imparted its influence to the inhabitants, for business appeared to be almost at a stand-still, the only persons visible being a few tradesmen standing at their doors gossiping with their neighbours, or staring lazily at the opposite side of the street. Looking beyond the church, I could just catch a vision of green fields and shady trees, with here and there a glimpse of the river shining in the sun, looking delightfully cool and fresh, and making the room in which I was standing seem close and stuffy by comparison. I had just made up my mind to leave the office for the afternoon, and have a little fishing before tea, when the door opened and my office-boy entered again. 'Please, sir, Mr Thomas Jackson wishes to see you,' he said.

'Mr Thomas Jackson!' I exclaimed in surprise. 'Do you mean Mr Jackson of Oakfields Farm?'

'Yes, sir—*Farmer* Jackson,' answered the boy.

'Oh, well, ask him in,' I said, unlocking my drawer and pulling out my papers and pens, which I had just put away for the day. I knew Mr Jackson well by repute. He was a well-to-do farmer, who lived a few miles from Barton, and I was aware that he entertained a strong prejudice against lawyers, he having had a disagreeable transaction with a rather sharp firm of attorneys some years ago; and it was believed he would as soon have thought of flying as of having anything more to do with a lawyer. I therefore felt considerable curiosity as to what brought me the honour of a visit from him.

Mr Jackson entered the room rather hesitatingly, I thought. He was a stout, tall man, of about forty years of age, with a pleasant, good-humoured expression of countenance; but to-day I fancied there was rather an anxious expression on his face. After exchanging greetings, I motioned him to a chair on the opposite side of the table, and waited for him to inform me as to the nature of his business. After fumbling about in his breast-coat pocket, he drew out a narrow strip of paper and handed it to me. On examining this, I found it to be a writ issued by Mr Sharper Flint, a money-lender at Barton, against Mr Jackson, to recover the sum of one thousand pounds with interest on a bond given by Mr William Jackson (father of Thomas Jackson) to the said Sharper Flint for money lent by him, and was issued against Thomas Jackson, as executor of his father, who had died some two years before.

'Well, Mr Jackson,' I said, looking up, 'this is rather a disagreeable document. What is the meaning of it?'

'Well, that's just what I want to know,' said Mr Jackson. 'I never heard a word of any such claim before. I suppose it is some dodge of that rascally Flint to try and get money out of me.'

'You never heard of any such claim before,' I asked, 'although the writ states that the bond was given six years ago?'

'Not a word, sir,' answered Mr Jackson. 'I never dreamed of there being any such claim until yesterday, when the writ was served on me.'

'I suppose you were acquainted with your father's affairs?' I asked.

'Yes, sir. We discussed business affairs together constantly, and it was very seldom he did anything without consulting me. Indeed, now I remember he did speak to me, some years ago, about borrowing a thousand pounds, which he wanted for a temporary purpose, from Sharper Flint; but I advised him not to do so, as I had no faith in him; and he told me afterwards that he had decided to take my advice.'

'It certainly does seem strange,' I said. 'I should think it very unlikely that your father would have borrowed so large a sum without letting you know, and without leaving any trace of it among his papers. I suppose you have been through his books and papers?'

'Yes, sir; I went through them all at the time probate of the will was granted, and there is not a trace among them of any such sum having been borrowed.'

'Well,' I said, 'we are completely in the dark about it at present; and I have no materials to

go upon in advising you what course to pursue. I think the best thing will be for me to call on Messrs Crawley and Fox, Mr Flint's solicitors, and see what they have to say about the matter, and, if possible, get them to show me the bond on which they claim.'

'Yes, I think that would be the best way,' replied Mr Jackson; and accordingly it was arranged that I should see Messrs Crawley and Fox the next morning, and that Mr Jackson should call on me in the afternoon, when we could further discuss matters.

I called on Messrs Crawley and Fox the next morning as arranged, and on mentioning my business, was shown into the office of Mr Crawley, the senior partner, who, I was informed, had the conduct of the business.

Mr Crawley, a withered little gentleman, with the orthodox parchment-coloured face, was sitting at a table littered with deeds, briefs, drafts, and the miscellaneous papers which usually cumber a solicitor's table. As I entered, he looked up.

'Good-morning, Mr Crawley,' I said. 'I have called to see you about that matter of Flint v. Jackson.'

'O yes,' said Mr Crawley, leaning back in his chair and pushing his spectacles on to his forehead. 'You are acting for the defendant, aren't you?'

'Yes,' I said; 'and we are naturally very much astonished at the proceedings which you have commenced. My client informs me that he never heard of there being such a claim until he was served with the writ.'

'You don't say so!' exclaimed Mr Crawley, opening his eyes with real or well-feigned astonishment. 'Now, that's very extraordinary.'

'It is extraordinary,' I said; 'but it is quite true. Until yesterday, my client was not aware of the existence of any such claim. He has been through his father's books and papers, and can find no trace whatever of any such sum having been borrowed.'

'Dear me—dear me! that's a very extraordinary circumstance, now,' said Mr Crawley again.

'Yes,' I said; 'and before taking any steps in the matter, and either admitting or rejecting the claim, my client wishes to make a thorough investigation into the affair; and I have called to know if you will let me see the bond.'

'Oh, certainly, certainly,' said Mr Crawley—'no objection whatever;' and going to the safe, he took the document out and handed it to me.

It was a formal bond, drawn up in the usual words, by which 'the said William Jackson bound himself, his heirs, executors, and administrators, to pay the said Sharper Flint, his executors or administrators, on demand the sum of £1000, with interest at £5 per cent.:' and was signed and sealed by Mr William Jackson, and witnessed by Mr Winter, his solicitor. I examined the stamp, and looked at the date of the water-mark on the paper, but could find no flaw in the document at all; in fact, it seemed to be a perfectly valid and binding document, and to leave no loophole of escape.

'You will admit,' I said, 'that it is a very suspicious circumstance that Mr Flint should

never have mentioned the fact of his having any such bond, and should not even have applied for the interest.'

'Well,' said Mr Crawley, 'it is unfortunate that it has been left so long; but my client informs me that it was only intended to be a temporary loan, and he therefore did not include it among the amounts he had out on mortgage, and on which interest was payable regularly. In fact, it was overlooked till the other day, when he had a thorough stock-taking.'

I could not succeed in getting any further information, and therefore took my leave, not altogether satisfied with the result of my interview. I did not believe that Mr Sharper Flint was the man to forget that he had an amount of a thousand pounds due to him.

Mr Jackson called upon me, according to appointment, in the afternoon, and I reported to him what I had done.

'I must say,' I said, 'that so far, I do not see that we have any defence to the action. The bond purports to be witnessed by Mr Winter, your father's solicitor; and on the face of it appears to be a perfectly genuine document.'

'Never mind that!' said Mr Jackson, bringing his fist down upon the table. 'I feel certain that my father never had that money, and I mean to fight him, and make him prove his claim in court.'

'Well,' I said, 'I think it is too large an amount to pay without a strict investigation, especially considering the suspicious circumstances of the case; and I think it will be wiser to defend the action and let it go to trial; and in the meantime we must make a strict investigation, and get all the information we can.'

'You are right, sir,' said Mr Jackson; 'and you need not be too particular about the expense; I shan't mind paying the money so much, if they win it after a fair fight.'

I accordingly entered an appearance to the writ; and while the action was proceeding, I made vigorous inquiries in every quarter from which I thought information might be obtained. Mr Winter, the lawyer who witnessed the bond, had died about four years before, and his estate had been sold by the executors. All his papers had been destroyed, except a few which it was thought might be important, and which had been intrusted to the keeping of a Mr Corry, a solicitor at Barton. I called on the latter, and informed him of the proceedings taken against Mr Jackson; and he overhauled Mr Winter's papers, but found nothing which threw any light on the matter. I also found that all Mr Winter's clerks had left the town except one, named Rogers, who had filled the position of engrossing clerk, but who recollected very little about the matter. After thinking upon the subject, he said he thought he did recollect engrossing a bond from Farmer Jackson to Mr Flint; but he had engrossed so many documents in Mr Winter's office relating to different matters, that he could not remember any particular document; neither did he know the addresses of any of the other clerks. In fact, it seemed to be impossible to get any information about it in the town; and the only course appeared to be to find out the addresses of as many of Mr Winter's clerks as possible and ascertain if they knew anything

about the matter. But we did not wish the other side to get wind of what we were doing, lest they should place obstacles in our way; and therefore the investigation proceeded secretly and, as a consequence, slowly.

INDIAN TANKS.

BY A HINDU.

NOTHING is so dearly prized by the Indian villager as the *talao*, or tank, for its water is not only used for irrigation during the greater portion of the year, but is also the principal source of his domestic supply. There are some tanks which are formed by throwing a mound or embankment across a valley or hollow ground, so that the rain-water collects in the upper part of the valley, and, when required for the purposes of cultivation, is let out upon the low lands by sluices. Others, in hilly districts, are constructed by damming a stream where it passes through a gorge, and look almost like lakes. But the ordinary village tank in the plains is a small lake dug out of the surface of the soil, filled up mainly by the periodical rains. A few of these *talaos* are lined on all the four sides with cut stone, forming elegant works; but in an ordinary tank there are only two ghâts, or masonry-built flights of steps, enclosed by low walls, going down a few feet under the water. At the head of the steps is a sort of terrace with backed seats, all of masonry. Besides being the usual staircases for drawing water, these ghâts are used for bathing purposes, and as lounging-places in the evenings. The *talaos* are found principally in the Deccan, in Gujerat, and in Bengal. They are made at a considerable expense, being invariably the works of the Hindus, the wealthy and benevolent amongst whom lavish large sums of money on them. And princes vie with their opulent subjects in erecting in dry lands magnificent reservoirs, capable of furnishing water for the irrigation of large tracts of country—a work which renders their name venerable to the latest posterity.

In the hot season, the water shrinks rapidly, through continual drawing and by reason of evaporation, till in May there is hardly any left in the tank. At that time children, with their clothes tucked over the knee, delight to cross and recross the slippery bed, picking up with great glee the fish that still struggle for their existence in the muddy water of the hollows. Often the tank gets so dry that you can walk over it as easily as on a paved road. In many parts, the exposed surface is cultivated, and good wheat, peas, &c., grow in the drying mud.

Great is the joy of the people when, at the break of the rainy season, the tank begins to fill up again. In some parts, gay festivals, accompanied by curious ceremonies, take place at that time. Religious processions are formed to march to the temples in the surrounding groves, where offerings of flowers, fruits, and vegetables are made. Young damsels dance merrily on the banks; and boys rush into the rapidly filling tank, shouting and swimming about; while the aged and sedate stand by, looking on with a complacent smile. The dances which take place on these occasions, being spontaneous outbursts of heartfelt joy, are more lively and natural than

those of the professional dancing-girls; the accompanying songs, like the rhapsodies of the improvising bards, are wildly melodious and touching; and the air and figure of the dancers, wholly unstudied, have something weirdly picturesque and graceful in them. A big lady leads the dance, followed by a troop of blooming girls, who imitate her varied steps, which are always exact in time, and when she sings, make up the chorus in tunes wonderfully soft, but gay and lively.

A curious festival marks the time of the setting in of the rains in some parts of Bengal. It takes place not only on the large ponds, but also on the Ganges and on all its tributary streams. At five o'clock in the afternoon the bank becomes crowded with people, attired in gay costumes, looking on eagerly towards the water where the boats begin to move. These are all of a singular construction, and profusely decorated. Some of them are called 'peacock-boats,' from the resemblance of their make to the peacock; others, 'snakes,' being very long and narrow, and moving quickest of all; while many are decorated with the head of a horse and different devices. Idols and religious ornaments are placed in some of these boats, in the most commodious part of which are laid carpets, cushions, and pillows, covered with silk, satin, and kinkhâbs, and fringed and embroidered with gold and silver; whereon are seated the men of rank and wealth, who are entertained by a man who dances, sings, and beats time to the oars, from which hang little tinkling bells.

But it is after the rains that the most enchanting scene is observed at a large tank, which is then full to the brim, and quite fifteen feet deep in the middle. It is an early hour in the morning. The serene cloudless sky lends a tender azure to the broad expanse of water, as it ripples under the breeze blowing on it, reflecting many a sun, as you look deep into it, flitting across from one side to the other. Close to the banks, the water assumes a deep green, the reflection of the overhanging branches of large trees, which stand on the edge, sheltering noisy little birds. In mid-water gaily swim a few couples of waterfowl, which dive among the bright lilies presided over by the lovely lotus. On the brink chirrup little birds, which timidly fly away directly they see a gorgeous peacock, radiant with joy at the sight of water, strut towards the edge, or a pair of snow-white cranes stalk forward, leading their young one between them. You see overhead the restless green flycatcher, the proud crowned hoopoe, the sly black crow, the scornful brown kite, and the poised gray kingfisher. Beyond the lake on the other side are the golden-brown stubble-fields; farther on are wide green sheets of wheat, gram, and other cereals, broken here and there by a deep-brown fallow, interspersed with stately trees—the peepul, the mango, the banian, and the palm—and clumps of bamboo or babul, through which peep the brown thatches and white roofs of the distant village.

While you have been contemplating the beauty of nature, the more interesting beauties of the village have dropped in on the ghât near you, most of them carrying a water-jar, which shows to advantage the graceful figures, draped in flowing robes of all colours. Among them you see an old woman with flaxen-white hair waddling near to the steps, propped on a stick, too feeble to carry

anything. Then there are matrons of forty or fifty accompanying their children; and young girls of twelve or sixteen wearing a quantity of ornaments. Taking a little rest, they go down the steps. While some perform their ablutions, and, standing chin-deep in the water, mutter prayers, others wash the household vestments, or, having finished their bathing, fill the jars, which they then balance skilfully on their heads or their waists. They leave the tank in little groups, the old women talking scandal, and the young ones whispering their love-affairs among themselves.

In the evening the village elders gather on the terrace, and, reclining comfortably on the seat, begin their daily gossiping in the intervals of smoking, while ill-clad little children gambol around on the ground. One group dilates passionately on the merits and faults of the two rival factions into which the villagers are divided; another discusses soberly the prospects of the crops and the course of prices: one party swears loudly at the vulture money-lender; another listens serenely to the religious discourse delivered by the village pandit. The shades begin to grow deeper; the cheerful and industrious ryots soon disperse home, followed a little later on by the idlers of the village.

THE TEXAN COWBOY:

HIS LIFE IN TOWN, ON THE TRAIL, AND ON THE RANCHE.

'GUESTS will please remove their pistols before entering the dining-room,' was the sign which met your eye as you stepped into the office of any of the hotels in Abilene, Kansas, in the early days when that town was the headquarters of the Texas cattle-trade for the United States.—'I'm a wolf, and it's my night to howl! I'm a bucking cayuse from Bitter Creek, wild and woolly and hard to curry! Whoop-pee! Every one take a drink!' were the words you could have heard uttered by some tipsy cowboy in any of the numerous drinking saloons in the same town almost any day or night during the season; and very often these words would be followed by shots from his revolvers, pointed in the air—just for the sake of hearing a noise, you know.

'Dance and move your feet quickly, you son of a gun, or I'll fill you so full of holes your mother will take you for a flour-sifter!' This exclamation was one often heard from one or other of the many whisky-wild frontiersmen who had picked on some greenhorn or 'tenderfoot' whom he desired to see dance, for the benefit of the crowd always to be found in the bar-rooms, and whose movements he accelerated by shooting into the floor in close proximity to his victim's feet.

'Down in time and make your game!' calls out the dealer sitting behind the faro table, at which from six to a dozen cowboys could always be found gambling, or, as they called it, 'bucking the tiger.'

'All hands around promenade to the bar! Take your partners for the next set!' shouts out the master of ceremonies, or 'herder,' as he is called, in the well patronised dance-house where cowboys, gamblers, frontiersmen, scouts, and

others whiled away the hours of night in wild carousal with the representatives of that class of women who would be found in such rough company.

Such is a picture of the frolics of the cowboy in town, who, just in from Texas by the old Chisholm Trail, has 'filled up' with fighting-whisky, which was considered the proper thing to do after his three or four months' drive across the vast prairies and swollen rivers *en route*. Here he is seen at his worst, with all the discipline maintained in camp by the foreman or 'boss-herder' removed; here he turns himself loose, to use his own expression, and acts as one of the wild cattle or horses which he is daily in company with would, if turned loose in a china-shop. From this standpoint, too, he is too often judged by people who have no idea of his life and the dangers he is surrounded with on the trail and range. In reality, the old-time cowboy is generally a wild, reckless, generous, big-hearted spirit, a rough diamond, thorough in everything he undertakes; rough, but honest; and in his camp his hospitality is proverbial. The cow-camp is a haven to the traveller, who is made welcome as he rides up, usually being greeted with the salutation: 'Light, stranger; chuck is just about ready, and I guess you can stow away right smart chance of it;' which being interpreted means: Alight; a meal is ready; and the host thinks his visitor can enjoy a good one.

The cattle he works with are the long-horned breed, raised on the vast plains of South-western Texas and New Mexico, which originally are supposed to have been introduced by the Spaniards. On these plains they are allowed to roam at will; each creature bears the brand of the owner on its side or hip; the only control exercised over them being at the yearly round-up, when the calves are branded, and such full-grown cattle gathered into a herd as are needed to send to the northern markets. These herds were until recently driven north by the cowboys crossing Red River, through the Indian nation and Southern Kansas, to the Atchison Topeka and Santa Fé Railroad, or the Kansas Pacific or Union Pacific. The road travelled is called a trail, which from time to time, as civilisation pushed westward, was changed. The government have now, however, prohibited the opening up of any new trails from Texas northward, because the emigration has been so heavy into the West in late years as to render it impossible to drive large herds of cattle through Northern Texas and Kansas without retarding settlements. 'Life on the trail' really means the life the boys used to lead in years gone by on this great thoroughfare from Texas; while 'life on the range' is usually the term used in speaking of the life at present on the cattle-ranges in Wyoming, Dakota, Colorado, and Montana, where the original long-horns from the South have been bred with fine-grade cattle of the North, resulting in larger creatures, better fitted for beef; and although they roam at will over the prairies, yet are not so wild as their fellows raised through the South.

It was no unusual thing for the old-time cattle-kingdoms of the South to brand several thousand calves each year; and their ranges, obtained through the old Spanish land-grants, extended

over several hundred square miles. On these ranges, the ponies—descendants of the Spanish barb imported from Spain, and turned loose generations since—used for the work run at large, and of course are as wild as the cattle. When the time arrives for the start to be made with a herd, the necessary number of these wild ponies are gathered, and the cowboys have eight or ten assigned to each one to ride during the drive; this necessitates good riding, courage, and recklessness. Each morning during the drive these ponies have to be lassoed and really rebroken; for a day or two of rest will be sufficient for them to forget the control obtained over them when being ridden before.

The cattle to be sent to market are driven into an enclosure called a corral, and a second brand, called a 'road-brand,' is burnt on their sides or hips. This is done in order that the cowboy may be able to distinguish those belonging to the herd he is attached to from those in other herds from the same range; for in years gone by, these southern cattle-owners often started two or three herds up the trail the same season, besides selling to dealers who operated between the ranges and the markets. The consequence of this branding is that many a creature will be seen with its sides and hips covered with different letters, figures, and characters—the brands of the different owners through which it has passed, until the hair is only visible in patches, the flesh being burned into ridges resembling a chess or backgammon board. After the road-branding is done, the herd—usually numbering from five to fifteen hundred head—is started on the trail, with an average of twelve cowboys to each thousand head, and a foreman; and followed by a huge wagon, loaded with flour, baking-powder, bacon, coffee, sirup, sugar, and salt—the provisions for the drive, which will occupy from two to four months. The teamster with the wagon also acts as cook for the camp; and although he would not pass muster in a first-class hotel or restaurant, yet a stranger would be astonished at the excellence of the meals he cooks in the open air despite the weather.

The distance usually travelled each day is from twelve to eighteen miles, according to the distance between water; for, when possible, the camp is made every night on the banks of a stream. The start each morning is made at sunrise, with a mid-day stop from about ten o'clock till two; then drive again till about five o'clock in the evening, the cattle being allowed to graze and drink at these stops. At dusk the cattle are gathered together, usually on sloping ground, and bedded down, as it is called, the cowboys riding around the group singing loudly, to quiet the cattle, which after a short time lie down to rest. Then all but two of the boys go to camp, spread their blankets on the ground, with the heavens for their only roof, and turn in to sleep, until each is wakened in his turn to keep guard over the sleeping cattle. This is called night-herding. If the weather is stormy, then the boys may look out for hard work; for the vivid lightning and loud thunder which visit these vast prairies are almost sure to frighten the wild cattle and madden them, until they start on a stampede, running at a furious rate, regardless of all obstacles, in a vain endeavour to get away from

the drenching rain and out of sight and hearing of the lightning and thunder.

At the first sign of a regular stampede, all hands are ordered out except the cook; the horses, which are kept saddled in readiness for an emergency, are mounted; and away to the front of the wildly running herd ride the cowboys, singing and shouting as they go; for, to a certain extent, the cattle will follow the human voice; and the object of the men is to lead the foremost cattle in a circle until they mix up with those in the rear of the herd; and as they crowd together—or mill, as it is called—they are checked in their mad race and gradually quieted. All the courage and nerve of the cowboy are required in handling a stampede; for if by any accident he is thrown from his horse, he will be crushed beyond all recognition by the sharp hoofs of the maddened brutes.

But once quieted, it does not follow that the herd will again go to rest; very often the first run is followed by others, each one more furious than the last, as the cattle become more frightened, until daylight. Then a count is taken; and if any are missing, as there usually are, not only cattle but men, the surrounding country is scoured for trails or fresh tracks leading away from the camp, which, when found, are followed by the man who discovers them, who, regardless of food, water, or sleep, is supposed to follow this clue until he overtakes the cattle the tracks are made by, the main herd being halted in the locality until all the strays have been brought in; or if only a few head are missing, the men who are sent to search for them are instructed to follow the main trail until they catch-up. Of course these searches mean long rides over a strange country; for often, after separating from the herd, a bunch of cattle will travel at the rate of twenty-five or thirty miles a day, usually in the direction of the range from which they were originally driven; and all the powers of endurance of the men are brought into requisition in a search of this kind, for no excuse will be taken by the foreman for the hunter's return without the cattle, except starvation really stares him in the face.

On the trail each day is a repetition of the previous one. In pleasant weather, the cowboy's life is not so hard; but in wet stormy weather he is continually in the saddle, wet through most of the time; and yet he is happy, with no other company for months than his own immediate companions. He never gets lonesome or homesick, but is always possessed of the same careless reckless spirit, which asserts itself so strongly when at the end of his drive he reaches the settlements and goes for a frolic to the town.

Life on the ranches in the north-western States and Territories differs from that on the trail in many respects, the most noticeable being, that instead of the ground for his bedstead, the heavens for a roof, and his saddle for a pillow, he has a comfortable house to live in—either a log-cabin or 'dugout,' according to the supply of timber in the neighbourhood—provided with large fireplaces, in which on a cold night the logs and pitchy pine-knots are heaped on, and where the boys can amuse themselves with cards or 'swapping lies,' as they call it, smoke, and have a good time generally, although their nearest

neighbour may be, and often is, twenty miles distant. Another difference—in stormy weather the cowboy on the ranche can usually stay in the house. Especially in the winter is his life an easy one, for at that season the cattle are pretty well left to shift for themselves, it being considered better not to drive cattle around at that season more than is necessary, as they need all their strength to keep alive through the storms, and to keep up their courage to hustle around and gather enough grass to keep them from starving, because there is no hay served to them except when running in very small herds, less than one hundred head.

The 'round-ups' in these ranges are made similarly to those on the southern, except that two are made yearly instead of one—the first, to brand the calves early in the spring and ascertain the losses sustained during the winter, which is called the general round-up, and is attended by all the cattle-owners, with their cowboys, who own herds in a certain section, probably being a hundred miles square. This is necessary, because in the north-west it is impossible to obtain large grants of land, as in Texas and Mexico; therefore, the cattle range on the public domain, and the owners build their ranches in the valley of some river, turn the cattle loose, and in the spring hunt them up at the general round-up. Then in the autumn the beef round-up takes place, when all the bullocks or steers over three years old are separated from the main herd and sent to market.

During the spring and summer months, especially at the round-up, the cowboys have to work hard; but not being engaged on one drive so long as they used to on the trail, they go to town more frequently, and consequently are not so wild when there as the old-timers on the Texas trails used to be. As this great north-west is settling up very rapidly and railroads being extended, the cowboy of the past is fast disappearing, and giving place to a perfectly civilised successor.

FAMOUS THEATRICAL RIOTS.

No candid critic can deny that of late years there has been a decided improvement in the *morale* of the histrionic art. This in the main has been brought about by men and women whose names are familiar to all lovers of the stage. The actors themselves, more than the frequenters of the theatre, have come in for a large share of public abuse; and yet it almost goes for the saying, when theatrical audiences are influenced by pure and noble motives, then it follows that those playing behind the footlights rise to the occasion. To understand the truth of our assertions, we need only take a hurried survey of one characteristic feature of the stage of sixty years ago—namely, its riots.

In the year 1679 two Cavaliers entered Lincoln's Inn Theatre, London, and attempted to set it on fire, because their greatest enemy, the Duchess of Portland, was in it at the time. The result of this attempt was a very serious affray, in which many people were injured. Again, in 1721, at the same theatre, while the play of *Macbeth* was in progress, a gentleman walked across the stage, the back of which at that period was seated for the public, to speak with a friend.

Of course the manager resented this sort of conduct, and for his pains was rewarded with a blow in the face. A brawl ensued; part of the audience supported the offender, and the other part the manager. Soon the two divisions of the house were engaged in a free fight; but the manager's division proved victorious, and expelled the other party. Matters, however, did not end here, for the marauders, reinforced from the outside, returned, smashed mirrors and mouldings, hurled lighted torches amongst the scenery, and refused to desist until compelled by the turning out of the military. In consequence of the riot, the theatre had to be closed for a week, and a guard stationed to prevent like occurrences in the future.

In 1754, Garrick, by his neglect of public sentiment, was the means of causing a serious riot. Britain and France at that time were at war; yet Garrick, without thought, engaged at great expense a number of ballet-dancers from the latter country. The consequence of the imprudent engagement was, that when the dancers appeared, a great uproar was begun by the occupants of the pit. The people who were sitting in the boxes sympathised with the dancers, and the gentlemen, urged by their ladies, descended with drawn swords into the arena. In spite of this, however, the pittites proved victorious, and clearing the theatre, destroyed everything. Thereafter, the rioters marched to Garrick's house in Southampton Street, Strand, where they attempted to do further damage, but were prevented by the military. When Garrick again appeared before the public, an apology was demanded of him; but he refused, declaring that he would rather leave the stage for ever. This threat had the desired effect.

However popular Garrick might be, he still was frequently the victim of tumults. Macklin the actor was the originator of the one we are about to narrate. Fleetwood, the manager of Drury Lane, had fallen into arrears, and a general 'strike' was declared by the actors, who pledged themselves to stand by each other. Fleetwood came to terms; but Macklin was made the scapegoat, for he and his wife were dismissed from the company. Garrick obtained a situation for the luckless pair, which was indignantly refused. Macklin published his imaginary grievances, which he affirmed originated in the conduct of Garrick. All impostors get a following of some kind; so did Macklin. Accordingly, the next time Garrick acted he was met with groans and hisses, and pelted with eggs and apples. So great was the tumult, that the curtain was dropped and the audience was dismissed. The following night, Fleetwood hired a company of roughs and prize-fighters; these he placed in the pit. As soon as the curtain rose, the disturbance began. Thereupon, Broughton, the leader of Fleetwood's improvised army, rose and said: 'Gentlemen—I'm told some people have come to interrupt the play; now, I've paid my money to hear it, and I advise them to go away quietly and not hinder my diversion.' These words were met with shouts of defiance; and fighting was the only alternative left to the mercenaries. Hats and wigs lay scattered about in all directions, and broken heads and noses were more common than otherwise. The hired men proved the victors; and after the

house was cleared of the disturbers, the remainder of the audience enjoyed the play in peace and quietness.

Not long afterwards, Macklin suffered similar treatment, but his superior did not value his talents at so high a rate as to warrant the services of a hired band; on the contrary, Macklin fell by his own devices, and was dismissed from the company.

In considering certain events in history, it is impossible not to be struck with the gullibility of humanity on certain occasions. What the generality do at times, the individual, without consideration, imagines correct. Often the curious habit displayed by the sheep is also observable in human opinion. Take the following. The Haymarket Theatre was the scene of a great riot in 1749. Throughout the city, posters announced that on a certain night a man in the Haymarket company would put himself into a quart bottle. The theatre was packed; but the conjurer did not appear. The audience, at first enraged, were easily appeased by the promise that on the following evening the performer would really appear, and use a pint instead of a quart bottle. The second night the audience was again disappointed. They had at length discovered their own stupidity, and were furious. The Duke of Cumberland, one of the occupants of the boxes, stood up with drawn sword, and advised the infuriated people to destroy everything within their reach. This was soon accomplished; and tearing down the trappings, they carried them into the street, where a large bonfire was kindled. It afterwards turned out that the hoax arose in the fruitful yet withal simple brain of the Duke of Montague.

The Duke of Cumberland was a great favourite with theatre-goers; and at his death, because certain persons appeared in the theatre without mournings, a riot took place, and was renewed, until the offenders against the public taste either absented themselves from the play or assumed the due mark of respect for the dead Duke.

The nineteenth-century theatre differs in many respects from that of the eighteenth. In the latter, the servants of gentlemen had some privileges. They had a right to remain in the seats of their masters till the latter arrived. The manners of the upper classes at that time were not altogether exemplary, and their lackeys followed suit, only they were more offensive. While sitting in the boxes, the footmen were allowed to spit or throw orange-peel into the pit; and when the appearance of their masters relegated them to the gallery, which privilege they had gratis, their conduct in no way improved. At length this gallery privilege was denied them, and flunkydrom was wroth. To give vent to their rage, the footmen congregated in vast numbers within the theatre. The uproar they caused put in the background all such past occurrences; and although the Prince of Wales was one of the audience, no heed was paid to him. The military were called out; fifteen of the disturbers were arrested, and next day suffered at the hands of the sheriff of London.

Mrs Siddons was once the victim of a cruel riot. On one occasion, while fulfilling an engagement in Dublin, a rumour got abroad that the great actress had refused to co-operate with her com-

pany in giving a benefit to an old Irish actor, West Digges. The rumour had its effect on the minds of outsiders, for when Mrs Siddons appeared, as Mrs Beverley in the *Gamester*, her reception was anything but flattering. This conduct upset her, and she fell fainting into the arms of John Kemble. The incident did not quieten the audience; but Mrs Siddons, recovering, acted on the advice of Sheridan, and made a very neat speech, which was received in silence. Never again was she the victim of an attack.

Edmund Kean once got involved in a love affair, and for his imprudence was severely criticised by the press, which went the length of advising his expulsion from the stage. Night after night the theatre was crammed; but the audience refused him permission to play, and everything went on in blind show. Kean was forced to retire to America; but bad luck also followed him there. His first engagement was at Boston, and the house was packed. Next night, only twenty persons attended, and Kean refused to allow the play to proceed. Some months afterwards, Kean again returned to Boston; but the Bostonians resolved to have their revenge. They refused to hear him; for whenever he appeared on the stage, he was met with showers of stones, bottles, bits of brass, and sticks. Poor Kean had to flee for his life. The rioters followed him to the back part of the theatre; and when they found he had eluded them, they betook themselves to his hotel, from which Kean escaped with great difficulty.

Macready visited the United States in 1849; but, unhappily, the partisans of Mr Forrest, an American actor, spread the report that the Englishman had hissed the American favourite while playing in London. In vain did Macready declare that the charge was false. Conscious of his innocence, he appeared as Macbeth in one of the New York theatres. When the curtain rose, Macready was greeted with thundering applause, as he thought. It was thunder in a sense, for it seemed to be noise without rational guides to its continuance or abeyance. He appealed to the American love of fair play; but all was without effect. Every kind of insult was heaped upon him; copper cents, eggs, apples, potatoes, lemons, and asacitida were thrown at his luckless person. It is said that chairs were hurled with great force on to the stage. The play of course was stopped.

Next night, the rioters returned; but a number of policemen were stationed amongst the audience, and these immediately expelled the turbulent spirits. The change of scene did not quell the disturbers, for in a short time they were howling round the walls of the building. The noise was deafening; but yet Macready never acted again as he did on that night. Matters came to such a pass that the military were marched to the scene. While sitting in the anteroom, Macready suddenly exclaimed: 'Hark! what's that? The soldiers have fired.' One volley followed another, and then the tumult subsided. News was then brought that several men had been shot. At once, Macready changed his clothes and walked away with the retiring audience. But although he went to a friend's house, his safety could not be insured; and he was forced to leave the city. An opportunity of doing this presented itself;

a doctor was about to drive to a dying patient in New Rochelle; but the actor took the surgeon's place, and thus escaped.

In 1809 a droll disturbance occurred at the Haymarket Theatre. Foote the actor had produced the burlesque, *The Tailors, or the Tragedy for Warm Weather*, and had thereby roused the wrath of the knights of the thimble and bodkin. So keenly did the tailors of the Metropolis feel the lampooning of the play that they sent a petition to the manager of the Company against its further production, promising at the same time that if the piece was changed, they would undertake to get a full house. The petition was spurned, as were also the threatening letters the manager received. When the play began, the first intimation the actors received of the determination of the tailors was a pair of scissors thrown at their heads. A reward of twenty pounds was at once offered to any one betraying the offender; but the only answer given to such an appeal was the hurling of other missiles. The magistrates and police were called in; they were powerless; but the Guards then stationed in London marched to the theatre and arrested nearly a score of the ringleaders.

The riots known by the name 'Old Prices' are the most notorious. Covent Garden Theatre was rebuilt in 1808; but somehow or other, the architects had managed to bring about some new changes of construction, which greatly displeased playgoers. The theatre was opened on the 18th September 1809 with a representation of the play of *Macbeth*, ending with a farce, in which the chief attraction was the well-known Madame Catalani. It was noticed when the curtain rose that throughout the audience there were scattered a goodly number of rough-looking fellows, bearing in their hands sticks and bludgeons. The overture was listened to without a murmur; but whenever Kemble stepped forward to recite the opening address, he was met with shouts to the following effect: 'Off, off! Old prices'—for the charge of admission had been raised—and 'Native talent.' Not a word of the play was heard; and Mrs Siddons fared no better than Kemble. As for the farce, it was even worse, and yet Catalani and Munden were taking part in its performance. Two magistrates appeared upon the scene, read the Riot Act, and ordered the people to depart; but the audience refused to move. Next morning, the *Times* supported the popular demand; and playgoers, encouraged from without, repaired night after night to the theatre, but refused to hear a single word. The actors were assured that the disturbance was not because of their actions, but simply from the fact that John Kemble, one individual, chose to fight John Bull.

On the third night, Kemble asked what was wanted. The reply was drastic enough. The stage was stormed, and the company had to take refuge where they could. But some of the actors unfastened the trap-doors of the stage, and in this way secured many of the disturbers, who were at once conveyed to Bow Street prison.

On the sixth night, Kemble proposed that the theatre accounts should be examined, so that the public might understand the reason for the heightened prices. The proposal was taken for victory, and a scroll of paper was unfurled by

some of the audience—the paper bore these words: 'Here lies the body of New Prices, who died September 23, 1809, aged 6 days.' The auditors appointed to examine the accounts were the Solicitor-general, the Recorder of the city of London, and the governor of the Bank of England. The result of their investigation showed that the net gain to shareholders amounted only to a little more than six per cent. For six years the receipts had been £365,983, and the expenditure £307,912, and added to this were twelve shares in the patent. Kemble, in view of these facts, felt justified in raising the prices, but terminated the engagement with Madame Catalani. The theatre was re-opened on the 10th of October; but rioting again was in the ascendant. Every one wore in his and her hat a piece of paper with the letters O. P. (old prices) printed on it. The pit became a pandemonium; playgoers, constables, soldiers, and actors fighting with each other. Kemble had to be escorted home by the military; but the crowds followed him and sang all night beneath his window.

During the scuffle, a Mr Clifford was seriously injured by the box-keeper, named Brandon. Against Brandon an action was raised, and Clifford won the case. The rioters were jubilant. They called a meeting, and with Clifford in the chair, pledged themselves to support every one injured as Clifford had been. While the meeting was proceeding, Kemble appeared on the scene, and stated that he would lower the prices, remove the obnoxious tier of boxes, and dismiss Brandon. John Bull had gained the victory, and was satisfied. So ended the notorious theatrical riots of Old Prices, they having lasted for sixty-one nights.

Well may we say that the times are changed. On the one hand we have the strange spectacle of a whole city taking a vital, nay, a personal interest in the drama; and on the other we see the passions of men roused to their keenest pitch with little regard to decency or order. The modern stage lacks the national interest, but it undoubtedly has made a great advance towards being a place for healthy and entertaining instruction both in the moral and social life of mankind.

'TILL DEATH DO US PART.'

In every Love-treaty, Death goes to the reckoning;
And now he is closing on yours and mine;
We have battled him bravely from line to line,
Till at last he is with us, his lean hand beckoning.

Nearer and nearer his shadow is blackening,
Slowly effacing our life's design;
In every Love-treaty, Death goes to the reckoning,
And now he is closing on yours and mine.

O Love! though my hand on the helm be slackening,
And a heart from a heart is hard to untwine,
Our dark night of sorrow brings brighter awakening;
The conqueror carries a message divine,
Of a treaty where Death has no part in the reckoning,
And Love evermore shall be yours and mine.

J. B. S.

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